

*An Historical Sketch  
of ....  
Grace Presbyterian  
Church*

*J. W. CRAWFORD, LL.B.*



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An Historical Sketch  
of  
Grace Presbyterian Church  
Calgary, Alberta

*by*  
*J. W. CRAWFORD, LL.B.*



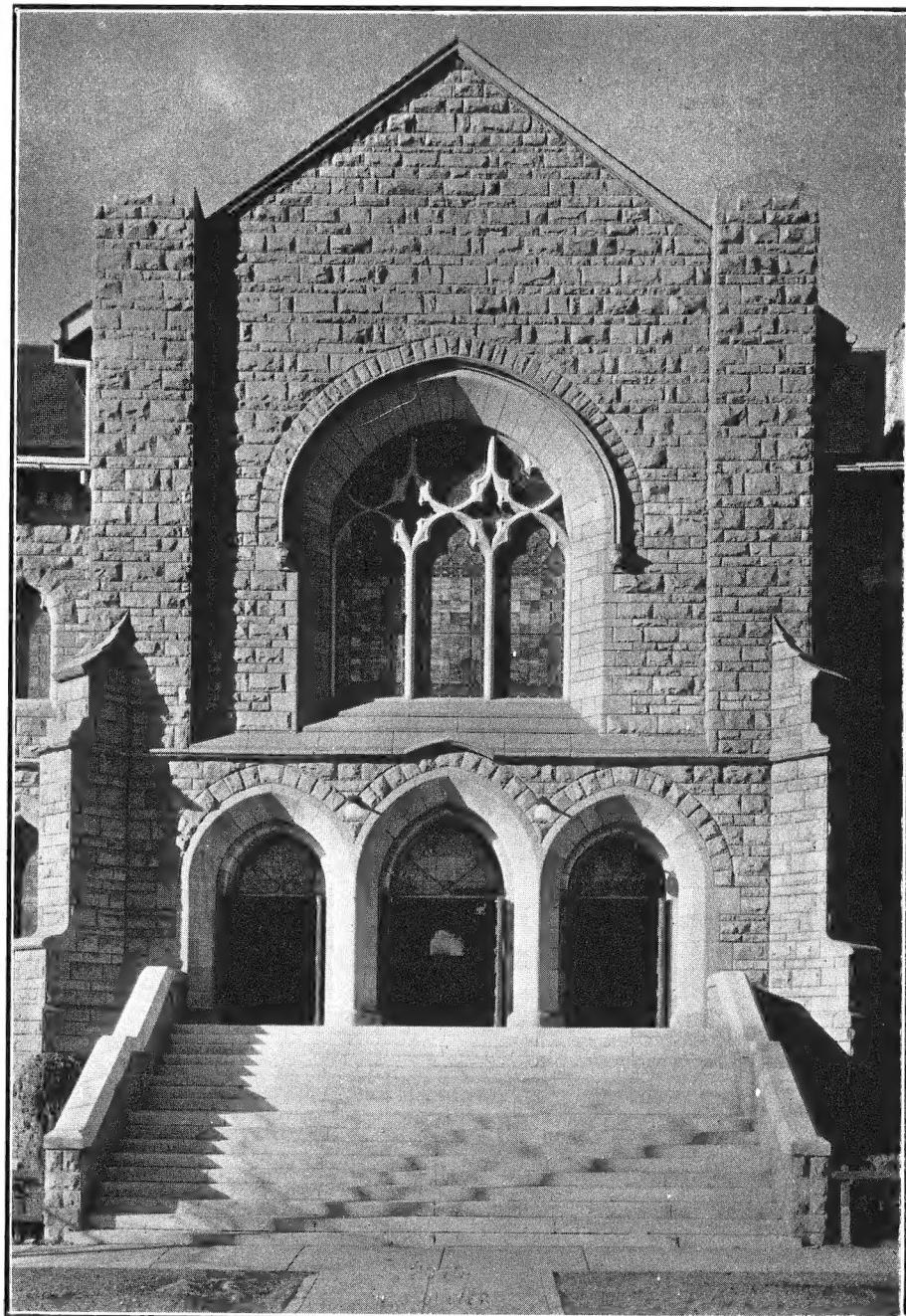
*With a Foreword*  
*by*  
*Rev. James McNeill B.D.*

65.9.22/7



GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH



*FOR E W O R D .*

THE CONGREGATION will be glad to have in permanent form a history of the Church from its foundation until the end of nineteen hundred and thirty-four. Such a history is of great value. It preserves events in the life-story of the Church which otherwise might be lost or forgotten with the passing of the years. It reveals facts from official records which ordinarily are not available to the Church member. This history tells a story of undaunted faith and indomitable courage which cannot but fill our hearts with joy and pride in our inheritance.

The author, Mr. J. W. Crawford, has placed us under a sense of deep indebtedness to him. His painstaking researches into Church records, and his sifting and careful examination of the many verbal statements made by original members who are still with us, have made this history possible, and we are much the richer as a people for our possession of it in its present form.

The author, however, is reticent about the part which he himself played in that important period of our history dating from the beginning of the year nineteen hundred and twenty-seven. In that year he was appointed Chairman of the Board of Managers, and he continued in that office until January, nineteen hundred and thirty-four. Those seven years are years of solid achievement in every department of our Church life. Inspired by Mr. Crawford's initiative, energy and vision, the Board undertook and accomplished great things for the Church, with the result that not only was our heavy mortgage indebtedness materially reduced, but the Church property itself was renovated in many ways.

We rejoice in the possession of this history of our beloved Church, and we record our thanks to Mr. Crawford for preparing it, and for supervising its publication.

For the Kirk Session of Grace Presbyterian Church,  
James McNeill, Moderator

*P R E F A C E .*

THOUGH scarcely thirty years have passed since Grace Church was founded, there are now less than a score remaining of those who partook of the Lord's Supper on that day in September, nineteen hundred and five, when the Sacrament was first dispensed in the original church. Of these only a few are now connected with the Church, the remainder being scattered to various parts of Canada. It was therefore thought desirable that a record of the Church's genesis and development should be compiled, while some remained who had been actively associated with her origin and early years.

The history of the events here recorded has been gathered from various sources, the memories of some who participated in the events, numerous reports of Church organizations, and the minutes of the Presbytery of Calgary, the Session and the Board of Managers.

The author owes and here tenders his thanks to all who have assisted him in this work, to Mr. McNeill for reading the manuscript and making many valuable suggestions and additions, to Mrs. Carter, now of Victoria, Mr. George Brydon, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Bell, Mr. James Marr, Mr. James Reid and Miss Margaret Reid, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Jamieson, Mr. A. H. Carr, Mr. Andrew Scotland and many others who have contributed information and incidents.

The record of accomplishment is submitted in all humility, in the full realization that others in a like period of time have accomplished as much or more. For what has been done we give God the praise, conscious of the fact that without Him we can do nothing.

If the perusal of these pages awakens some long lost memory or brings a light to the eye of any who took part in the early struggles of Grace Church or inspires others to emulate their example, the author will be content.

The Author.

Calgary, January, Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-five.

### *The Beginning.*

SOMETIMES an individual, inspired by a sublime idea, animates it into a vital, spiritual organism which grows, buds, bursts forth into flower and bears fruit bringing health, happiness and good to humanity—and pious men say “the Spirit of God caused it.”

Again the “still small voice” works, not through one alone, but through many, and almost before men realize it a great institution has been brought into being which lives and enriches the lives of men and women.

Thus it was with the origin of Grace Presbyterian Church. Three women, Mrs. Alexander Aird, Mrs. George Brydon and Mrs. David Carter—the “A.B.C.” of Grace Church—first conceived the idea, by their vision and enthusiasm inspired others and by their energy and zeal pressed forward the work of organization till Grace Church was an accomplished fact. The Spirit of God had been working in the minds and hearts of those three women and action followed.

As the result of the thought and work of these three, on the evening of the second day of February, nineteen hundred and five, a little band of Presbyterians met in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Aird, to discuss the formation of a Presbyterian Church in the then sparsely settled west end of the City of Calgary.

That little group consisted of Mr. and Mrs. David Carter, Mr. and Mrs. George Brydon, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Scotland, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Watson, Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Henderson, Mrs. Skelling, Mr. R. Richardson, Rev. Dr. A. O. McRae and Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Aird. Mr. Watson acted as chairman. A petition to the Presbytery of Calgary was presented, signed by upwards of fifty Presbyterians, requesting the formation of a Church in the west end. On motion duly carried it was decided to present the petition forthwith.

Some preliminary work had, of course, been done. In the autumn of nineteen hundred and four some of those interested had approached Rev. Dr. Herdman, then Superintendent of Missions in the west, with the view of establishing a mission Church and Sunday School in the locality. Dr. Herdman had voiced his approval and assured the applicants that if a certain number of children could be found to form a Sunday School, the petition for a Church would be granted.

The above named ladies, chiefly Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Brydon with Mrs. John A. Bell, undertook a canvass of the district with

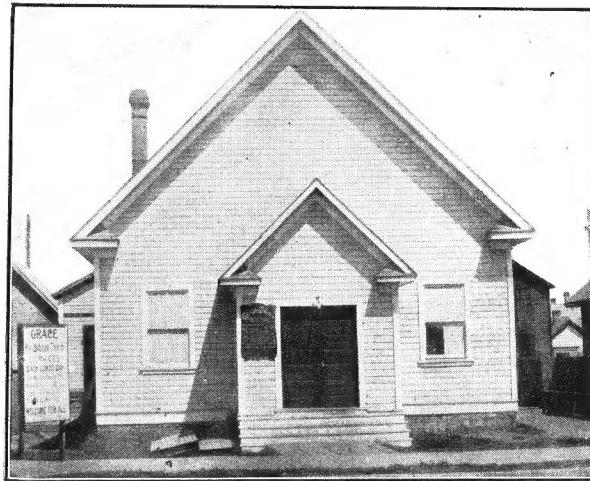
## GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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the result that the required number of children was obtained and the petition for a Church subscribed.

It should be remembered that at that time there were few telephones and no sidewalks nor pavements. The only means of getting in touch with the people was by going from door to door. This required considerable time and patience under circumstances not always pleasant. But these ladies were canvassing, not for money but for men and women, boys and girls. They were working for a great cause. They were enthusiastic. They were determined. Their work was their pleasure. Success crowned their efforts.

The petition was promptly presented to Presbytery, which, after fully examining into the matter, on the twenty-third day of February, nineteen hundred and five, resolved: . . . "to form an ordained mission charge in the southwest part of Calgary and that Rev. J. A. Clark be authorized to take the necessary steps for organization."



THE ORIGINAL CHURCH

### *The First Building.*

With the energy and enthusiasm characteristic of the west the work of organization was undertaken at once. A building committee was appointed, money collected, a site for the church obtained at nine hundred and twenty-four Twelfth Avenue West, building operations commenced, and on Sunday, the second day of July, nineteen hundred and five, the church was opened and dedicated by Rev. Dr. Herdman, assisted by Rev. Dr. A. O. McRae.

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One who took part in the work has this to say: "It was a wonderful satisfaction to us to see the result of our efforts in such a complete building in such a short time." All had helped, the men in the actual construction of the building, the ladies in cleaning windows, painting and varnishing woodwork, and the many other ways in which ladies can help.

The pulpit chair was donated by Mr. Hugh Neilson, of Neilson's Furniture Store, the desk by Knox Church and the Bible by Mr. J. C. Linton, of Linton's Book Store.

"For the people had a mind to work."

It would be well nigh impossible to give too much credit to those pioneers for the accomplishment thus consummated; their powers of inspiring others, their organizing ability and the indefatigable energy of their own hands were everywhere felt, and the Church owes them a debt of gratitude it can never fully repay.

Rev. C. A. Myers, B.A., was the first Minister. He took up his duties when the Church was opened, although not formally inducted till the eighth day of February, nineteen hundred and six. Rev. J. A. Clark, the Minister of Knox Church, was the interim Moderator; the interim Session consisted of Rev. Dr. A. O. McRae and Mr. J. A. Langlands, of Knox Church.

At the opening of the Church the Sunday School had seven teachers and seventy scholars, and Mr. John A. Bell acted as superintendent.

On the nineteenth day of September, nineteen hundred and five, the first Communion service was held. Ninety-seven names were presented for membership and seventy-five partook of the Sacrament.

The first annual meeting was held on the tenth day of January, nineteen hundred and six, and was preceded by music and refreshments.

Marked progress was reported in all departments. Most of the original reports are still extant and all indicate a lively interest in the work. On the date of the Sunday School report there were nineteen teachers and one hundred and thirty-eight scholars, with an average attendance for the year of one hundred.

A Ladies' Auxiliary had been organized, a Mission band, a Boys' Club and a Young People's Society. At this meeting Mr. Thomas Humphries was elected Superintendent of the Sunday School.

The interim Board of Managers consisted of Messrs. Crawford, Aird, Scotland, Watson, Richardson, Brydon, and Carter. They reported that the completed church had cost approximately

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\$2,000.00; there remained unpaid a mortgage of \$1,000.00 and a small unsecured debt of \$150.00. The remainder of the cost had been raised in cash. Total ordinary receipts had been \$530.45 and the year closed with a balance in bank of \$13.59. The congregation was receiving \$300.00 per year from the Augmentation Fund.

On the fourteenth day of January, nineteen hundred and six, Mr. John A. Bell, Mr. F. W. Laing and Mr. W. R. Reid were inducted as the first elders and shortly thereafter Mr. Bell was appointed Clerk of Session. Of these only Mr. Bell remains, and it is but fitting to add that throughout the Church's history both Mr. and Mrs. Bell have taken an unfailing interest in the work and have always been in the forefront of any effort to advance the cause of the Master. They have given liberally of their time, their talents and their substance in the work they love so well.

The first Board of Managers, elected at the first annual meeting, consisted of Mr. J. E. Roach (chairman), Mr. Isaac Hale (secretary), Mr. Alexander Aird, Mr. Andrew Scotland Mr. David Carter, Dr. Duncan Gow, Mr. George Brydon, Mr. J. G. Watson and Mr. James Howie.

In August of nineteen hundred and six Mr. Myers found it necessary to leave Calgary on account of his health, and Rev. Dr. A. O. McRae was appointed interim Moderator.

On the eighth day of January, nineteen hundred and seven, Rev. Andrew MacWilliams, of St. Mary's, Ontario, was inducted as Minister, and the period which followed was one of considerable growth. In perusing the old minute books of this date one frequently notes comment about building a larger church.

Mr. Frank Stevenson was the first organist and choirmaster. He was a young man of sterling qualities and rendered his services voluntarily.

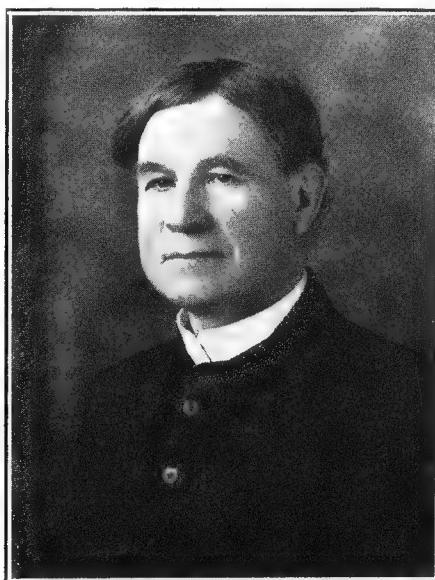
In May of nineteen hundred and nine a proposal to unite with Wesley Methodist Church was briefly considered but declined. Grace Church, though at this time financially weak, was thus early showing her strong Presbyterian tendencies. In this year the sum of \$1,100.00 was subscribed and paid for missionary purposes.

Mr. MacWilliams resigned in June, nineteen hundred and ten, and Rev. J. A. Clark was appointed interim moderator.

Mr. Thomas Humphries was appointed Session Clerk in October, nineteen hundred and ten.

*Expansion.*

On the third day of October, nineteen hundred and ten, a call was extended to Rev. Alexander Esler, at one time of Cooke's Church, Toronto, which he accepted. He was inducted on the twenty-first day of October.



REV ALEXANDER ESLER, M.A., D.D.

The Church now entered upon its greatest period of expansion. At the annual meeting on the eleventh day of January, nineteen hundred and eleven, there were one hundred and eighty-five names on the roll. The total receipts for all purposes for the preceding year had been \$7,512.31. An addition had been made to the church in the fall after the arrival of Mr. Esler at a cost of \$1,600.00 with furnishings of \$700.00 extra, all of which had been paid. This had been accomplished by the voluntary labor of the men of the congregation under the direction of Alderman J. G. Watson, a member of the Church. The Sunday School had three hundred scholars and had contributed \$672.12 during the year.

At this meeting it was thought that a new and much larger building was an urgent necessity. Calgary was growing rapidly and it was necessary for the Church to keep pace. A special building committee was appointed to investigate the matter and report.

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The following gentlemen composed the Building Committee:		
John A. Bell (Chairman)	J. H. Jamieson (Secretary-Treasurer)	
Alex. Moffat	J. D. Chisholm	Rev. Mr. Esler
George W. Rae	John Swanson	D. McCutcheon
Alex Low	George Brydon	I. G. Watson
R. H. Wallace	T. Humphries	R. P. Kirk

*The New Church.*

On the twenty-ninth day of March, nineteen hundred and eleven, the congregation decided to build a new modern church. The project was launched in April at a banquet given by the Ladies' Aid. Architects' plans were submitted, and those of Messrs. Smith and Gemmel of Toronto finally accepted. A building site, on the southwest corner of Fifteenth Avenue and Ninth Street West, in a residential district, was selected and the approval of Presbytery to its acquisition obtained in July.

Mr. John Swanson was appointed building foreman and so continued until completion of the church. Fifteen years after the building was finished competent engineers and surveyors pronounced the church one of the very best constructed buildings in the Province of Alberta. This was a fine tribute to Mr. Swanson's work.

The site was purchased from the Hudson's Bay Company at a cost of \$12,000.00. A large sum of money was subscribed and excavation was commenced in the fall of nineteen hundred and eleven. The cornerstone was laid in June, nineteen hundred and twelve, by Rev. Dr. McKay, Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions for the Presbyterian Church in Canada and retiring Moderator of the General Assembly. Throughout the year nineteen hundred and twelve the work was carried on and by the spring of nineteen hundred and thirteen the building was so far completed that it was decided to hold a dedicatory service in July.

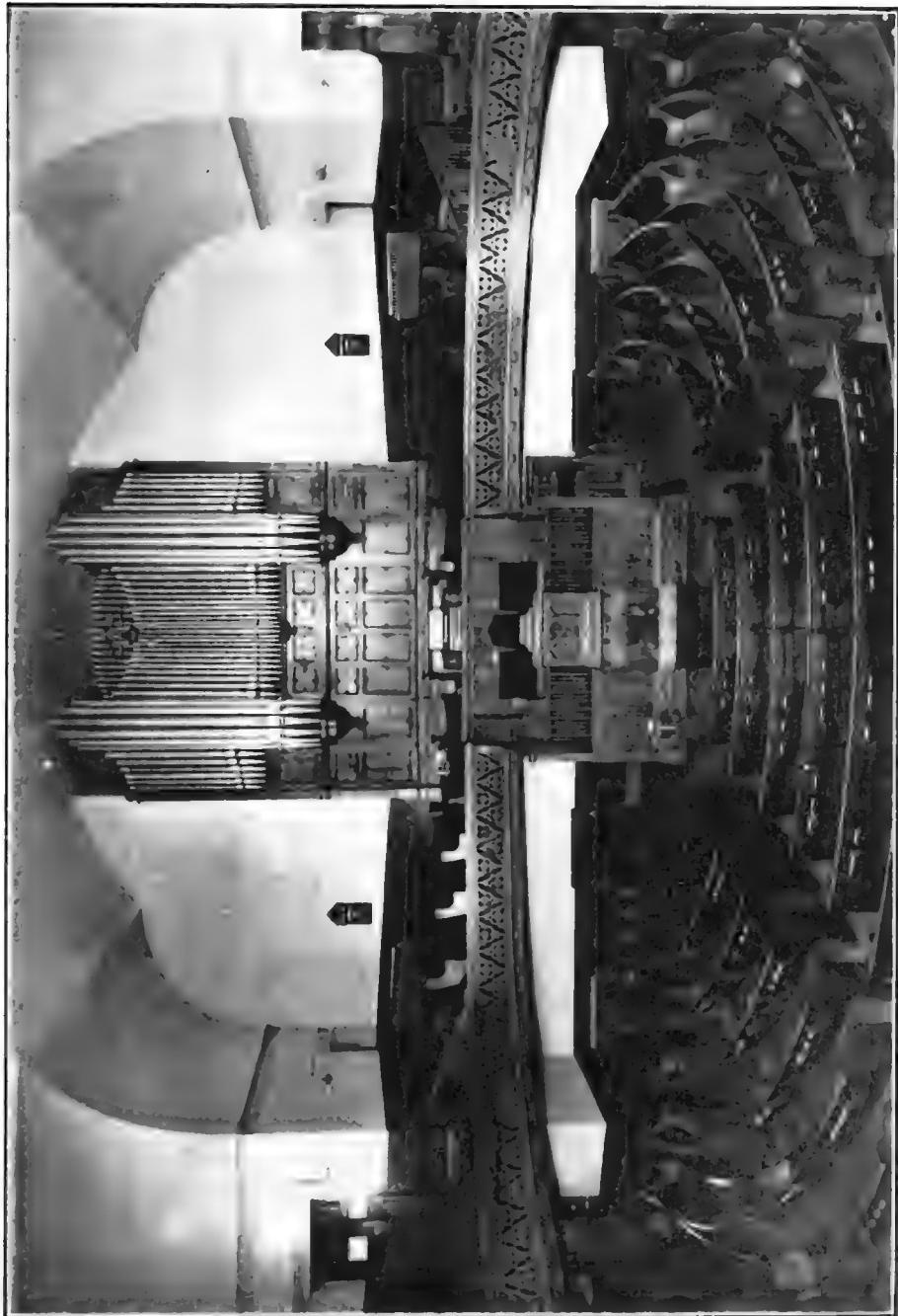
On the twenty-seventh day of July, nineteen hundred and thirteen, the new church, with a seating capacity of over twelve hundred, was formally opened by Rev. Dr. Patterson of Cooke's Church, Toronto, assisted by Rev. John McNeill, also of Toronto, and dedicated to the service of Almighty God.

On the afternoon of Sunday, the twenty-seventh day of July, the Sunday School, four hundred strong, marched in a body from the old to the new church. Special services were held over a period of two weeks and were brought to a close on the tenth day of August by Rev. Mr. Esler, the Minister.

The church faces the east on Ninth Street West and the main auditorium is entered from the street through the beautiful entrance

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INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH

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shown in the frontispiece. The auditorium is one hundred feet long and eighty-five feet wide, with the pulpit at the western end below the choir gallery. The seats are arranged in circular form. A gallery completely encircles the auditorium. The four-manual organ is installed in a large recess above the choir. Back of the auditorium is the church hall, also used as the main Sunday School room, with smaller rooms on the sides.

The basement is fully utilized and contains a large gymnasium, a lower hall, a well equipped kitchen and a boiler room. The gymnasium is also used as a banquet hall, capable of seating five hundred and fifty people.

The total cost of the new building, including seats, was \$110,647.78, and of the site \$12,000.00. Over \$60,000.00 had been subscribed, but not fully paid, and \$75,000.00 were obtained by mortgage. The old building and site were sold for \$9,500.00.

Mrs. J. H. Jamieson donated the beautiful stained glass window in the east end of the church in memory of her mother. Others contributed towards particular features but the records of the names and gifts have been unfortunately lost. All contributed a wonderful spirit of helpfulness and also financially to the utmost of their ability.

The church was ready for occupancy, but this was not accomplished without much labor and many trials. At the outset the city was in the midst of a period of tremendous growth, nothing short of a western boom, but before the completion of the building this boom had subsided and many who had subscribed in the utmost good faith found themselves wholly unable to implement their pledges. That the building was completed at all is a magnificent tribute to the energy and courage of those in charge of the work, as well as to the tenacity of purpose and self-sacrificing zeal of all concerned. There was a large unsecured debt of nearly \$22,000.00. The tower and basement had not been completed but the church was open for services.

Meanwhile the regular work of the Church had been fully maintained. At the annual meeting in January, nineteen hundred and twelve, there were four hundred and forty-two members on the roll and over four hundred scholars in the Sunday School. Total receipts for the previous year had been \$7,365.38; the Sunday School had raised \$1,286.34 in addition, and \$3,268.90 had been given for missions.

In January, nineteen hundred and thirteen, it was reported that for the year nineteen hundred and twelve there had been a net increase in membership of one hundred and forty-five and a corresponding increase in the Sunday School. For ordinary purposes \$6,465.00 had been contributed and for missions the sum of

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\$4,316.71. These amounts were in addition to the large amount paid for the construction of the new building. All branches of the work were in a growing and flourishing condition.

In April, nineteen hundred and twelve, the first vote on Church Union resulted in two hundred and fifty-five against and ninety-one for the Union.

The ninth annual meeting was held in January, nineteen hundred and fourteen, when it was reported that two hundred and thirty new members had been admitted during the previous year. The sum of \$6,808.41 had been raised for general purposes, and \$3,564.52 for missions. The building committee, having discharged their task, were relieved from further duty and the cordial thanks of the congregation were extended to them.

On the twenty-seventh day of February, nineteen hundred and fourteen, six hundred and twelve members partook of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

### *The War.*

Then came the Great War. Here the members of Grace Church showed their devotion to Canada and the Empire and the principles of liberty and justice. Over two hundred and fifty of the members and adherents of the Church enlisted and served in the ranks of Canada's famed divisions on Flanders' Fields, on the Somme, at Vimy Ridge, others at Gallipoli, at Salonika, with the Grand Fleet and wherever there was fighting to be done. Over forty paid the supreme sacrifice. The women of the Church, in common with their sisters throughout the Empire, did war work of all kinds and kept bravely on though often their hearts were heavy as they thought of those who would not return.

In December, nineteen hundred and fifteen, the second vote on Church Union resulted in a vote of two hundred and thirty-four against and one hundred and sixty-one for the Union.

At the annual meeting held in January, nineteen hundred and sixteen, the membership was reported at eight hundred and ninety-nine. The Sunday School reported seven hundred and fifty-four scholars. The sum of \$15,069.00 had been raised for all purposes including \$1,640.00 for Missions.

In the autumn of nineteen hundred and seventeen, special anniversary services were held under the leadership of Rev. Mark Mathews, D.D., of First Presbyterian Church, Seattle, Washington. These services, both afternoon and evening, extended over a period of one week. The main auditorium on Sunday and the lecture hall on weekdays were taxed to overflowing and a considerable increase in membership followed. The meetings were marked by deep

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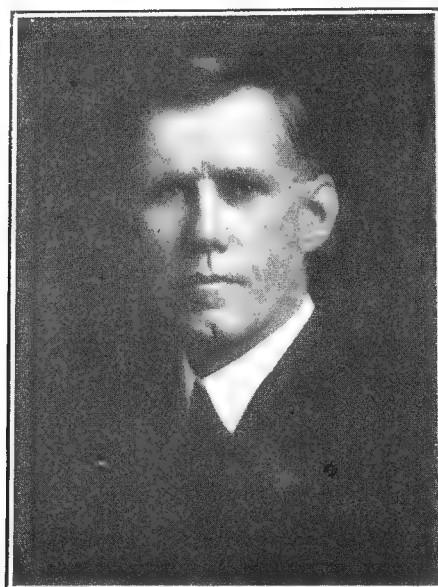
spiritual feeling and resulted in an intensified conviction and renewed determination to carry out the great work that had been undertaken.

The years nineteen hundred and fourteen to nineteen hundred and twenty were difficult ones for Grace Church. The heavy debt was proving a tremendous load. The loss in membership, with the consequent decline in giving power, was a serious blow, but those at home courageously carried the burden, with the result that, at the end of this period, the floating debt was discharged, and the Church took on new life.

In March, nineteen hundred and nineteen, Mr. Esler received a call to Robertson Presbyterian Church, Vancouver, which he accepted. He left Calgary in May after eight and one-half years of faithful service and inspiring leadership.

Rev. A. C. Wishart was appointed interim moderator.

In October a call was extended to Rev. A. D. Reid. Mr. Reid accepted the call and was inducted on the fourteenth day of November, nineteen hundred and nineteen.



REV. A. D. REID

In February, nineteen hundred and twenty, the Church sustained a heavy loss in the death of Mr. Alexander Moffat, who had been chairman of the Board of Managers for several years. Mr. Moffat was a man of stainless character, of tireless devotion to duty, a true Christian gentleman and a staunch Presbyterian.

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In May, nineteen hundred and twenty, Rev. J. R. Laverie became Assistant Minister, as the heavy work was proving too great a burden for Mr. Reid.

By the year nineteen hundred and twenty-one the unfinished rooms of the basement were completed, floored and furnished for the use of the Sunday School. Great credit for this work is due to the leadership of Mr. (now Alderman) R. H. Weir and the voluntary services of several other men of the congregation.

In April, nineteen hundred and twenty-one, Mr. Reid received a call to Knox Church, Edmonton, which he accepted. Rev. A. Rannie was appointed interim moderator.



REV. ROBERT JOHNSTON, B.A., D.D.

In July a call was extended to Rev. Robert Johnston, B.A., D.D., of the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal. Dr. Johnston accepted the call and was inducted on the ninth day of September, nineteen hundred and twenty-one.

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Mr. Humphries resigned the Superintendency of the Sunday School after fifteen years of devoted service and Mr. R. H. Weir was elected in his stead. Mr. Humphries had also been Clerk of the Session and on his removal to Victoria, B.C., Mr. T. B. Moffat was elected to that office on the thirtieth day of May, nineteen hundred and twenty-two.

In nineteen hundred and twenty-three the Church commenced to broadcast the regular Sunday morning services over the radio. This was continued for a number of years but was discontinued at the close of Dr. Johnston's ministry and resumed for some years under the ministry of Mr. McNeill. In this way the Church ministered to a very large unseen congregation and her influence was widely extended.

### *Church Union.*

In December, nineteen hundred and twenty-four, the formal Union campaign commenced and Grace Church was the scene of several stirring addresses and discussions on the subject; but she remained loyal to the Presbyterian faith, and on the final vote on the twenty-first day of January, nineteen-hundred and twenty-five, there voted against Union four hundred and eighty-four, and one hundred and seventy-seven in favour.

On the formal Union in June, nineteen hundred and twenty-five, Grace Church lost about one hundred and seventy-five members but before the end of the year received from other Churches about the same number, and on the thirty-first day of December, nineteen hundred and twenty-six, the roll contained ten hundred and forty-one names.

Nothing had been paid on the mortgage debt since the new church was built, but in March, nineteen hundred and twenty-six, the Board of Managers, under the chairmanship of Mr. George M. Thomson, inaugurated a campaign to raise the sum of \$10,000.00 to apply on that debt. The attempt was successful and \$10,000.00 were paid off the mortgage that fall.

In May Dr. Johnston received a call to Knox Church, St. Catharines, Ontario, which he accepted. He left Calgary in July.

Dr. Johnston's ministry was marked by an increase in membership and general growth in all branches of Church work. He was an eminent scholar, a fine preacher, and a kindly pastor. Under him the Church prospered greatly. He guided her through the difficult period of the Union campaign and it is in no small measure due to his work that Grace Church remained Presbyterian.

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*Consolidation and Growth.*

On the tenth day of March, nineteen hundred and twenty-seven, Rev. James McNeill, formerly of Nelson, New Zealand, was inducted into the ministry of Grace Church.

The congregation had been without a regular minister for nearly a year and was consequently considerably scattered and disorganized, many having gone to other Churches.



REV. JAMES MCNEILL, B.D.

The roll was purged in January leaving eight hundred and ninety-six members, but in Mr. McNeill's first year, one hundred and forty-six new names were added and each succeeding year has seen a considerable addition, till at the beginning of the year nine-

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teen hundred and thirty-four the number on the roll stood at eleven hundred and twenty-seven of an active membership, the largest in the history of the Church.

In nineteen hundred and thirty-one Mr. Alderman Weir retired from the office of Superintendent of the Sunday School, after having served in that capacity faithfully and well for ten years. He was succeeded by Mr. C. J. Campbell, who held the office for three years. The present Superintendent is Mr. J. A. Clarke, who has had wide experience in the work.

During Mr. McNeill's ministry the capital debt has been reduced by \$18,000.00 and now stands at \$53,500.00. Upwards of \$10,000.00 have been spent on major repairs and betterments. More than \$28,000.00 have been contributed to the Mission schemes of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and other missionary purposes exclusive of the contributions of the Women's Missionary Society.

In nineteen hundred and twenty-nine, the banner year from the financial standpoint, the sum of \$31,339.46 was raised for all purposes compared with \$1,320.15—the amount raised in the first year of the Church's history.

In nineteen hundred and thirty-one the church was equipped with an acousticon, by means of which those with poor hearing may hear perfectly.

At a simple but impressive ceremony on Sunday, the fourteenth day of October, nineteen hundred and thirty-four, Mrs. J. N. Gunn unveiled a beautiful, red Scottish granite, baptismal font, the gift to the Church of Dr. Gunn and his brother, Mr. W. H. Gunn, in memory of their father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hector Gunn, who formerly belonged to the Church.

Mr. McNeill, in accepting the gift on behalf of the Church, paid a fine tribute to the Christian lives and work of Mr. and Mrs. Hector Gunn. The first children baptised from the font were Robert Gordon McArthur, Eleanore Rose Wyllie and Lois May Stuart.

### *Things Spiritual.*

But although the amount of money raised, particularly for Missions, may be one criterion of a Church's growth and helpfulness, it is by other things that its true stature must be judged. As one result, amongst others, of the profound spiritual influence of the Church upon the lives of her members, there have gone forth two missionaries, Miss Helen Millar and Mr. Charles Young.

Helen Millar came with her family to Grace Church from Cooke's Church, Toronto. She was a deaconess here from nine-

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teen hundred and sixteen to nineteen hundred and eighteen, when she went out to Central Africa and served there for sixteen months when she died as the result of a snake bite in January, nineteen hundred and twenty.

Charles Young was born on a farm in the Springbank district, sixteen miles west of Calgary, in eighteen hundred and ninety-one. The youngest of seven children, he received his early education at the country school and came to Calgary in nineteen hundred and seven to attend Western Canada College. While attending that school he identified himself with Grace Church. After finishing at Western Canada he entered Alberta University at Edmonton. He took his Arts degree in nineteen hundred and twenty-one and was ordained and designated a missionary to India in the same year. His first field of labor was at Jhansi, where he worked till his first furlough, in nineteen hundred and twenty-seven. On his return he went to Bhil where he is still faithfully and successfully working for the cause of Christ.

Miss Violet Shirley Scott, another girl brought up in Grace Church, in nineteen hundred and twenty-eight became superintendent of the Presbyterian Girls' Residence at Saskatoon and continued in that capacity for about six years, when she returned to Calgary and took up the work of Deaconess-at-large for the Presbyterian Churches of Calgary. In nineteen hundred and thirty-four Miss Scott went east and was engaged as one of the travelling field secretaries of young peoples' work for the whole Church.

Seldom if ever has Grace Church been better organized to carry on the work than she is at this time. There are classes for all ages from the cradle roll upwards. Through the various Sunday School classes and Young People's organizations, the youth of the Church are provided for as never before and the results are being continually shown as each communion season sees the names of many of these young people added to the roll of membership.

Through the Ladies' Aid and other auxiliary organizations the members and adherents, particularly newcomers and those confined to home or hospital through illness, are regularly visited and words of encouragement proffered. The men are organized into an association for social intercourse and benefit. Material assistance is given to those in need and a sense of spiritual health and well-being pervades the whole congregation.

Over it all the Minister presides, going in and out among his people, bringing words of cheer and of the love of God in Christ. By his able sermons, sound in the faith, he brings inspiration and encouragement, strengthening all who hear him to meet the vicissitudes of life.

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Mr. McNeill came to us at a difficult period in our history just after the Union when consolidation and reorganization were essential. He has performed his task in an able manner. He has won the esteem and high regard of his people and is looked upon as one of the most outstanding men of the Church.

The work of Mrs. McNeill, particularly in her own Women's Bible Class and other women's organizations, has been of inestimable worth. Her abundant ability and sincerity, her quiet, dignified and kindly bearing have widely endeared her and have brought inspiration and strength to many.

It would be scarcely proper to close this part of this history without naming one who has served the Church long and well. Mr. A. H. Carr was first elected to the Board of Managers in June of nineteen hundred and fourteen and has served on the Board almost continuously since that date. He was the Board's secretary for several years, and chairman in nineteen hundred and thirty-four. Mr. Carr's intimate knowledge of the Church's history and business affairs has been of great assistance to the Board for many years.

*Women's Organizations.*

The Ladies' Aid and The Women's Missionary Society were organized as one under the name of The Herdman Ladies' Auxiliary of Grace Church, on the eighth day of September, nineteen hundred and five, with Mrs. C. A. Myers as president and Mrs. Aird as secretary.

The first report of this Auxiliary presented at the first annual meeting of the congregation, after recording the fact and date of organization, proceeds: "Its object is to aid the local congregation and to advance the Mission Work of the Church."

In nineteen hundred and nine this body was disbanded and was succeeded by The Ladies' Aid and The Women's Co-operative Missionary Society.

*The Ladies' Aid.*

Mrs. John A. Bell was the first president of the newly formed Ladies' Aid, and it may be said at the outset that the purposes for which it was organized have been well and faithfully fulfilled. By a regular visitation of the members and adherents of the congregation, the Ladies' Aid has performed an invaluable service. It has brought comfort and cheer, to the extent of its ability, to many who found themselves in circumstances of need. In the thirty years

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of its existence it has contributed, directly and indirectly, upwards of \$45,000.00 to the purposes of the congregation. Some outstanding donations made by this organization of devoted women may be mentioned. These are : \$1,500.00 towards the organ debt; \$1,000.00 for redecorating the church; \$1,800.00 for new floors; \$1,000.00 for ceiling the basement; \$1,000.00 for kitchen equipment and table-ware, and several thousand dollars to the general funds of the Church.

Acting on the suggestion of Mrs. James McNeill, the Ladies' Aid was reorganized, towards the end of nineteen hundred and twenty-nine, into ten districts with the avowed aim of keeping in touch with every woman in the Church, making strangers and newcomers acquainted, and bringing into active service as many women as possible. Under a succession of capable presidents the Ladies' Aid has done much to consolidate the work of the Church not only from a financial point of view, but also in fostering the spirit of friendship among the women of the congregation, and in remembering those laid aside by sickness. Truly this organization has always proved a bulwark of strength.

### *The Women's Missionary Society.*

This body was first called The Women's Co-operative Missionary Society. When organized, it consisted of two branches covering both Home and Foreign Missions, with Mrs. MacWilliams as president and Miss M. McPhedran as secretary.

In nineteen hundred and fourteen the two branches were united and affiliated with the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Throughout its history the society has been served by willing and devoted women, and it has seldom failed to raise the amount of money allocated to it for missionary purposes.

The effectiveness of Grace Women's Missionary Society was greatly enhanced when Mrs. Robert Johnston introduced the "Group" system of meetings. Groups met in different districts under their own conveners, and the monthly meeting of the Women's Missionary Society was a gathering of all the groups in one place under the leadership of a general president. The "Group" system is the method still practised.

Under the auspices of the Women's Missionary Society, Young Women's Missionary Associations and Mission Bands have been organized. The Young Women's Missionary Association of Grace Church is, and always has been, one of the most vigorous in western

## GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Canada. This society, in addition to supporting the local Women's Missionary Society, has given material assistance to struggling Presbyterian causes throughout the province and engages in work of a benevolent kind at festive seasons.

The Helen Millar Mission Band provides missionary education for young people of tender years. The C.G.I.T. (Canadian Girls in Training) an organization for girls in their early 'teens adds to its missionary activities a programme of training in Christian citizenship.

These three missionary bodies are a source of strength to the missionary cause. Thus the Women's Missionary Society through its general meetings, Group meetings, and meetings of its various auxiliaries, and by fostering the study of approved missionary literature, keeps vividly before the Church the great command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." "Freely ye have received freely give," is the motive of its ardour.

Throughout the Province of Alberta and in the far-flung Mission Fields of our Church abroad, Grace Church Women's Missionary Society by material and spiritual assistance rendered, has performed a noble service.

### *The Women's Bible Class.*

An adult Bible Class for women has been one of the organized women's efforts for many years of the Church's history. Mrs. Esler was the first to organise such a class. She gathered round her a large body of women for intensive Bible study. Her class was called the "Win One Bible Class" and the women aimed at bringing another to Christ. When Mrs. Esler left Calgary, the class was carried on in turn by Mr. H. J. Spicer, Dr. McQueen, Mr. F. M. Motter and Miss Rattie, who was a converted nun.

In nineteen hundred and twenty-seven the Women's Bible Class was again organized by Mrs. James McNeill. Here many women came into closer touch with their Saviour, and into deeper sympathy and Christian fellowship with one another. Through the weekly collections and a Birthday League started by this class, contributions were made annually to the Church's Missionary Budget. Benevolent work was always dear to the hearts of the members of these classes, and many a struggling mother was helped materially and encouraged spiritually by its members.

### *Other Organizations and Societies.*

The young people of the congregation have always had their useful organizations and societies. The Oaks and The Mountaineers are Senior Bible Classes for boys and young men, organized by Mr. T. B. Moffat, who, for twenty years or more, has been an outstanding leader of youth in the Church. Members of The Oaks are to be found in every walk of life. During the Great War many of them volunteered for service, and some laid down their lives.

The Young People's Society is a mixed organization for those of eighteen years and upwards. This society has contributed much to the social and educational sides of its members.

The True Blue Girls, organized by Mrs. F. W. Allott, have served the Church in various ways, particularly in decorating the auditorium when special services are announced.

### *The Choir.*

From the time of her organization the Church has looked well to her service of praise and has always had a good choir. The Choir is a purely voluntary organization, there being no paid soloists. Despite the fact that some of its members could easily have obtained paid positions elsewhere, they remained loyal to Grace Church. All through the years the Choir has rendered devoted service.

### *The Church Officer.*

Mr. John Tosh has served the Church faithfully as Church Officer for upwards of twenty years, having commenced his service on the fifteenth day of April, nineteen hundred and fourteen. Mr. Tosh takes a lively interest in keeping the Church building in a neat and cleanly condition, and he is always ready to give cheerful assistance whenever required.

### *Conclusion.*

It may be remarked that thirty years are a short period in the life of an organization. But the past thirty years have been years of transition, construction and development in the history of Western Canada. They have been critical years in the growth and development of the Province of Alberta. Grace Church has contributed tremendously to the moral and spiritual stabilisation, not only of the City of Calgary, but also of the whole province. She has grown with the city and with the province. She has not the his-

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torical background nor the time-honoured traditions of the older Churches, in the east; but she has to her credit this fact, that she has taken a leading part in laying solid foundations of righteousness upon which future generations will continue to build. Beginning in a small way, she has become one of the fifteen largest Presbyterian Churches in Canada in point of influence and membership. She stands, a solid rock of Presbyterianism, in this great western land, maintaining, defending and upholding the faith of our fathers and the Word of God upon which that faith rests. While humbly proud of her achievements, she realizes that the past is but the prelude to a greater future. Her real work lies before her. What has been done is but preparatory for that which is yet to be accomplished. The opportunity and the need are alike great. Let the spirit of the founders of this Church dwell in us—the strong, vibrant spirit of men and women who dared to trust God and who in the strength of a mighty faith went out and conquered.

*"And the Lord said unto Moses,  
Wherefore criest thou unto Me?  
Speak unto the Children of Israel  
that they go forward."*

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*The Ministers.*

Rev. C. A. Myers, B.A., D.D.	July, 1905-Sept., 1906.
Rev. Andrew MacWilliams	Jan., 1907-June, 1910.
Rev. Alexander Esler, M.A., D.D.	Oct., 1910-May, 1919.
Rev. A. D. Reid	Nov., 1919-Apl, 1921.
Rev. Robt. Johnston, B.A., D.D.	Sept., 1921-July, 1926.
Rev. James McNeill, B.D.	Mar., 1927.

*The Elders.*

*Mr. John A. Bell	Inducted Jan., 1906.
Mr. F. W. Laing	Ordained Jan., 1906.
Mr. D. W. Reid	Ordained Jan., 1906.
Rev. Dr. A. O. McRae	Inducted Mar., 1907.
Mr. Thos. Humphries	Inducted Mar., 1907.
Mr. David McCutcheon	Ordained Mar., 1907.
Mr. A. P. Morrison	Ordained Mar., 1907.
Mr. James Martin	Ordained Mar., 1907.
Mr. J. P. Ross	Ordained June, 1908.
Mr. J. MacMillan	Ordained June, 1908.
Mr. George Swallow	Ordained June, 1908.
Mr. Alexander Low	Ordained June, 1908.
Mr. S. Y. Taylor	Ordained June, 1908.
*Mr. John Swanson	Inducted Aug., 1911.
*Mr. T. B. Moffat	Inducted Aug., 1911.
Mr. J. W. Keith	Ordained Aug., 1911.
Mr. Wm. Aberhart, B.A.	Ordained Aug., 1911.
Mr. R. P. Kirk	Inducted Sept., 1911.
Mr. Geo. Rae	Ordained Nov., 1911.
Mr. A. R. Bell	Inducted Nov., 1913.
*Mr. J. H. Maguire	Inducted Nov., 1913.
Mr. C. E. Robertson	Ordained Nov., 1913.
Mr. E. Stephenson	Ordained Nov., 1913.
Mr. D. E. Wright	Ordained Nov., 1913.
Dr. A. E. Aikenhead	Ordained June, 1915.
*Mr. Chas. Colville	Ordained June, 1915.
Dr. J. T. Ferguson	Ordained June, 1915.
Mr. Hugh Neilson	Ordained June, 1915.
Mr. A. J. Park	Ordained June, 1915.
Mr. J. E. Livingstone	Inducted Nov., 1917.
Mr. D. M. McCall	Ordained Nov., 1917.
Mr. J. G. MacFarland	Ordained Nov., 1917.
Mr. D. W. MacMillan	Ordained Nov., 1917.
Mr. Arch. McTeer	Inducted Nov., 1917.
Mr. J. V. Smith	Ordained Nov., 1917.
Mr. H. J. Spicer	Ordained Nov., 1917.
*Mr. Geo. Tollington	Ordained Nov., 1917.
*Mr. James Reid	Ordained Nov., 1917.
*Mr. J. H. Jamieson	Ordained Feb., 1920.
Mr. R. S. Taylorson	Ordained Feb., 1920.
*Mr. R. H. Weir	Ordained Feb., 1920.
Mr. W. L. Webster	Ordained Feb., 1920.
Mr. McHardy	Inducted Feb., 1920.
Dr. J. V. McQueen	Inducted Feb., 1920.
*Mr. J. S. Alexander	Ordained June, 1922.
Mr. Walter Geddes	Ordained June, 1922.
Mr. H. C. Graham	Ordained June, 1922.

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Mr. Geo. Hume .....	Ordained June, 1922.
*Mr. Wm. Jackson .....	Ordained June, 1922.
*Mr. Chas. E. Lasher .....	Ordained June, 1922.
Mr. Jesse Motter .....	Ordained June, 1922.
Mr. R. H. MacMicking .....	Ordained June, 1922.
Dr. Elmer Wright .....	Ordained June, 1922.
*Mr. J. A. Clarke .....	Inducted Jan., 1926.
*Mr. John S. Kennedy .....	Inducted Jan., 1926.
*Mr. C. J. Campbell .....	Inducted Jan., 1926.
Mr. John Cooper .....	Inducted Jan., 1926.
*Mr. F. W. Allott .....	Ordained Mar., 1928.
Mr. N. H. Campbell .....	Ordained Mar., 1928.
Mr. R. J. Sharpe .....	Ordained Mar., 1928.
*Mr. J. D. Chisholm .....	Ordained Mar., 1928.
*Mr. T. J. Noble .....	Inducted Mar., 1928.
*Mr. J. D. Broad .....	Ordained Feb., 1930.
*Mr. F. Cheesbrough .....	Inducted Feb., 1930.
Mr. J. A. De Wolfe .....	Ordained Feb., 1930.
*Mr. Hugh McCallum .....	Ordained Feb., 1930.
*Mr. J. B. McLaren .....	Inducted Feb., 1930.
Mr. Robt. Turner .....	Inducted Feb., 1930.
*Mr. W. L. Swanson .....	Ordained Mar., 1932.
*Mr. John Duncan .....	Ordained Mar., 1932.
Mr. Arch. McLaren .....	Ordained Mar., 1932.
*Mr. R. B. MacLachlan .....	Ordained Mar., 1932.
*Mr. John Paxton .....	Ordained Mar., 1932.
*Mr. Thos. Crawford .....	Inducted Mar., 1932.
*Mr. F. R. Law .....	Ordained Mar., 1932.
*Mr. Murdo McIvor .....	Ordained April, 1932.

NOTE—\*Elders in 1934.

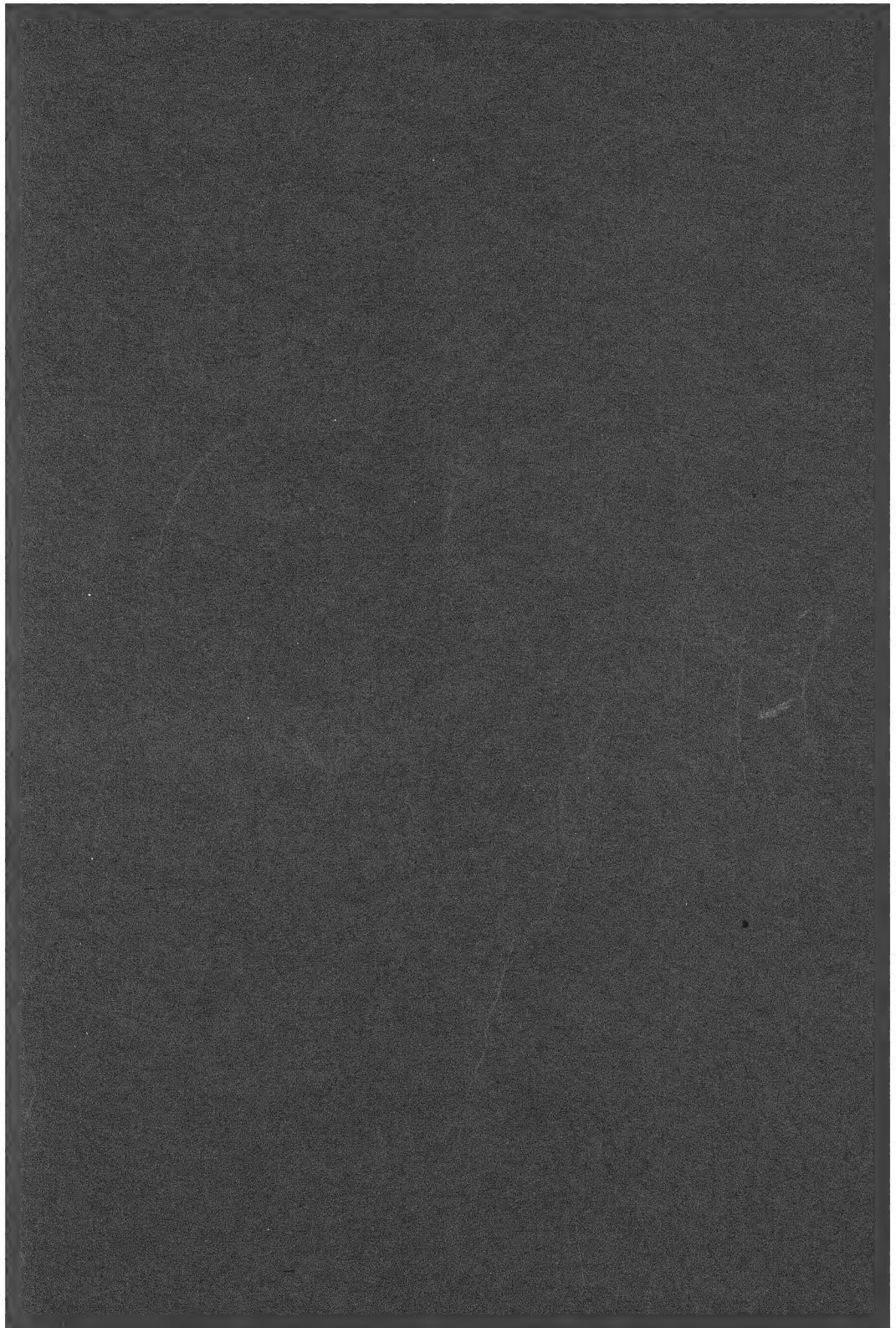
*Chairmen of the Board of Managers.*

Mr. Alex Crawford .....	1905
Mr. J. E. Roach .....	1906
Mr. J. G. Watson .....	1907
Mr. James Marr .....	1908-June, 1909
Mr. S. Y. Taylor .....	June, 1909-Oct., 1910
Mr. J. G. Watson .....	Oct., 1910-Dec., 1910
Mr. Alexander Moffat .....	1911-1919
Mr. J. S. Arnold .....	1920-1922
Mr. Geo. W. Skene .....	1923-1924
Mr. Geo. M. Thomson .....	1925-1926
Mr. J. W. Crawford .....	1927-1933
Mr. A. H. Carr .....	1934

*The Organists and Choirmasters.*

Mr. Frank Stevenson.	Mr. P. L. Newcombe.
Miss Catherine Little.	Mr. H. W. Reader
Mr. R. G. Standerwick.	Mr. J. C. Cook.
Mr. Percy Hook.	Mrs. F. M. Motter.
Mr. Stanley Bligh.	Mr. Frank Nurdling.
Mr. J. G. W. Rendall.	Mr. Harry Rimmer.

V. J. Graham  
Mr. ...  
in Searchfield



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